THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED BY THE CHAIR

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: November 9, 2004

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:05 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members   Absent Members
Jackie Nytes, Chairwoman
Vernon Brown
Becky Langsford
Lynn McWhirter
Lincoln Plowman
Joanne Sanders
Steve Talley

AGENDA

PROPOSAL NO. 627, 2004 - approves a transfer of $20,000 in the 2004 Budget of
Voter's Registration (County General Fund) to fund the increased and unanticipated costs
related to the increased volume of voter registrations
"Do Pass"   Vote: 5-0

Presentation on the New Software for the Property Records System

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Administration and Finance Committee of the City-County Council met on Tuesday, November 9, 2004. Chairwoman Jackie Nytes called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m., with the following members present: Vernon Brown, Becky Langsford, Lynn McWhirter, Lincoln Plowman, Joanne Sanders, and Steve Talley.

PROPOSAL NO. 627, 2004 - approves a transfer of $20,000 in the 2004 Budget of Voter's Registration (County General Fund) to fund the increased and unanticipated costs related to the increased volume of voter registrations

Kyle Walker, Voter Registration, said the voter registration office has been overly busy this year and the bulk of increases in voter registrations occurred the last month of voter registration. This increase caused the voter registration office to increase their staff by using temporary employees for roughly three weeks. Mr. Walker said they had to spend funds out of their Character 01, Personal Services and they now need to transfer funds from Character 03, Other Services and Charges to cover the funds spent.

Councillor Plowman asked if they are attempting to clean up the voter registration database. Mr. Walker said they are attempting to clean up the database by matching their records with other county records throughout the year.

Councillor Sanders asked what type of back up documentation they obtain when they do purge a voter from the list. Mr. Walker said all purge voters have some sort of back up information, rather it be a report from the Department of Health or a jury notice that the voter has requested to be removed from the list. Mr. Walker said they keep and scan all the information they received on the purge voter. Councillor Sanders asked how long they keep the hard copy of the document. Mr. Walker said they keep the hard copy for two years and the scanned copy is permanently kept on disk. Councillor Sanders asked if they found higher than normal mistakes made relative to the temporary employees. Mr. Walker said it is not unlikely to have temporary employees not accustomed to the system make mistakes. He said many of their temporary employees had volunteered in the past and had a grasp for their system. Councillor Sanders asked what the hourly rate to temporary employees was. Mr. Walker said they were paid $8.00 an hour. Councillor Sanders asked if the individuals or a temporary agency was paid. Mr. Walker said the amount was paid to the individual.

Councillor Brown asked how much of an increase was made in voter registrations. Mr. Walker said he does not have the exact number, but it is excessive compared to a typical year. He said what contributed to the problem was not only having more registrations but receiving them in a much more compressed period of time. He stated that it allowed the employees only two weeks to get the voter registrations entered into the system. Councillor Brown asked if they were able to get all voter registrations entered in the system. Mr. Walker said all proper voter registrations were entered into the system.

Chairwoman Nytes asked if Voter Registration is generating a list of names of voters that were mistakenly purged from the list. Mr. Walker said the primary source for purging a voter is from the Department of Health or any type of mailing indicating the voter needs to be purged. He said they are limited in their legal obligation on how they can purge voters. Chairwoman Nytes asked for an explanation on the request for $5,000 in Personal Services-fringes. Mr. Walker said the employees are temporary employees and not from a temporary agency. Chairwoman Nytes asked what fringes the temporary employees would be eligible for. Mr. Walker said the employees were eligible for social security.

Councillor Sanders moved, seconded by Councillor Brown, to send Proposal No. 627, 2004 to the full Council with a "Do Pass" recommendation. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Presentation on the New Software for the Property Records System

Paul Ricketts, Lawrence Township Assessor, said they have developed focus groups to help identify things that need to be in the new property records system. He said they also looked at technical focus groups to see what other options are available. The group has two vendors to date, and it also knows there is a list of 18 potential vendors throughout the country. He said the focus group has attempted to address the assessment challenge but is not sure of what the new rule will be. Mr. Ricketts stated that they had good participation from the local Geographical Information System (GIS) and the City County GIS. He said GIS' goal is to meet the needs of everyone to allow one system to work from. Mr. Ricketts said with yearly updates they may have to touch each real estate parcel but changes will need to be made on the personal property each year. He said right now their reporting is done by desk top audit which will raise a red flag if property has decreased or increased.

Mr. Ricketts said by having the focus group, their relationships are enhancing. They have a better understanding of the relationship between the Auditor, Treasurer, and Assessor. They are working with GIS, and they already have a relationship with Building Authority. He said the plan is to have the system operating for next year's assessment date. With the current system, it is a day to day approach and they are looking forward to working on the new software. Mr. Ricketts said the state has issued a report indicating that there has always been a software rule and the state can write the standards. He stated there has been some confusion on this rule, the state can order the assessors to follow the rule but not the vendor. Mr. Ricketts said the assessor is responsible to provide the data following the state order, and some enforcement may be created in the future.

Councillor Sanders asked who would have primary ownership of information that is programmed into the software. Mr. Ricketts said they have discussed buying the software and inputting the information. Councillor Sanders asked if they are asking that the Marion County Assessor owns the primary information or the company producing the software owns it. Mr. Ricketts said the County Assessor will own the assessing information and the company is just the technical advisor. Councillor Sanders asked if

they will be totally aware of what is designed into the software. Mr. Ricketts replied in the affirmative. He said there are 18 potential vendors, but about 5 vendors would be able to handle the volume of Marion County. The two vendors they have already consulted are very aware that the statute requires the data to belong to the Assessor.

[Clerk's note: Councillor Talley arrived at 5:30 p.m.]

Councillor Brown asked what the cost was of the outside consultant that facilitated their focus group. Mr. Ricketts said they paid $66,000 out of reassessment funds. Councillor Brown asked if every assessor in Marion County was involved in the process. Mr. Ricketts said everyone was invited and participated.

Chairwoman Nytes asked how maintenance is being done on their current system. Mr. Ricketts said the maintenance is done by Information Services Agency (ISA). Chairwoman Nytes asked what authority the Information Technology (IT) board has relative to the assessors moving ahead with the system. Mr. Ricketts said the IT board approves all contracts that have to do with IT and this enterprise. He said it makes since to identify your funding to the IT board and keep them up to speed. Chairwoman Nytes asked how unified the database will be. Mr. Ricketts said the property records system itself will always be public record. He said on the assessing aspect of the software everything is on the table at this point. Chairwoman Nytes asked if the software will unify the Marion County database or be broken down by township. Mr. Ricketts said everyone will work from the same software structure. Chairwoman Nytes asked if a new system will also allow them to have information on tax exempt property. Mr. Ricketts said only if they enter that information. Chairwoman Nytes asked what the estimates of the cost of this project are. Mr. Ricketts said between the $4-$6million range. Chairwoman Nytes asked what resources they have available. Mr. Ricketts said they have a savings account of about $2 million and are working on locating other funds. They are anticipating a three year payment plan.

[Clerk's note: Councillor Langsford arrived at 5:45 p.m.]

Councillor Sanders asked if they have current market values. Mr. Ricketts said they are using the year 1999 as their base market values; therefore, they use 18 months market values before and after the 1999 year to do their sale disclosures. He said they still are working on an old concept, but if they go to a yearly update they will be closer to the market value.

Councillor Talley asked if they would have to pay if a problem is detected in the new software. Mr. Ricketts said that would be something that is negotiated in the contract. He said if there is a problem with the company's software, it would be the company's responsibility to correct the problem. Councillor Talley asked who would pay if there is an updated version of the software. Mr. Ricketts said this also would be something that would be negotiated. He said typically the enhancements would be the assessor's. If

another county has an enhancement, the focus group would negotiate to receive the software free.

Chairwoman Nytes asked if the focus group is working together to prevent double efforts. Mr. Ricketts said this is something they are working on in making sure all efforts are not doubled.

Councillor Talley asked if there is any anticipation of incompatible issues between software and hardware. Mr. Ricketts said they do not anticipate any problems, because the software will have hardware requirements. The goal is to match the software with the hardware they currently have. They do anticipate some conversion problems but feel confident they will work through it.

Chairwoman Nytes asked if they will need an appropriation from the Council for the software. Mr. Ricketts said not in the short term. He said they should be able to handle it if they go with an outside vendor to form Request for Proposals (RFP). Chairwoman Nytes said she is uncomfortable with that process. She said she is looking for ways to stay involved to insure there is full engagement from everyone. Mr. Ricketts said the assessors are not going to spend away their savings account on something that may go to a dead end. He said he is willing to keep the Council up to date on things by a written report.

<u>CONCLUSION</u>

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Administration and Finance Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Nytes, Chairwoman
Administration and Finance Committee

JN/as